

Approved For Release 2000/08/29 : CIA-RDP79R00890A000700080010-1

NSC BRIEFING

DOCUMENT NO. 17
NO CHANGE IN CLASS
RECLASSIFIED
CLASS. CHANGE TO: TS
NEXT REVIEW DATE: 29 August 1956
AUTH: HR 70-2
DATE: 1-14-80 REVIEWER: 372044 1

SOUTHEAST ASIA: #1--SOUTH VIETNAM

South Vietnam remains firmly committed to the West, and is increasingly concerned over what President Diem calls the "rampant" growth of neutralism in Asia.

- A. The Vietnamese are keenly aware that the emergence of a hostile regime in Laos would--in combination with an inimical Cambodia and a Communist North Vietnam--complete South Vietnam's physical isolation from friendly territory.
- B. The Diem government also fears that a "settlement" in Laos will

weaken present British and Indian tacit acceptance of South Vietnam's own anti-Geneva stand.
Approved For Release 2000/08/29 : CIA-RDP79R00890A000700080010-1

~~SECRET~~

Approved For Release 2000/08/29 : CIA-RDP79R00890A000700080010-1

1. Both the UK and India tend to connect a north-south settlement in Vietnam with Communist willingness to come to terms.

II South Vietnam is therefore taking steps to protect its position.

A. An envoy has been despatched to Laos, to counterbalance any Communist diplomatic representation there that may be established following Premier Souvanna's Peiping trip.

B. Also, Saigon's quasi-official "representative" in Cambodia is instructed to combat Communist intrigue in the event Viet Nam diplomats show up there.

C. The South Vietnamese have emphasized to Prime Minister Nehru that Indian interests in Indochina are best served by keeping South Vietnam independent.

Approved For Release 2000/08/29 : CIA-RDP79R00890A000700080010-1

SECRET

Meanwhile, Diem is continuing efforts to shore up South Vietnam's internal defenses against communist subversion, and constant military and police pressure is being maintained on Viet Minh cadres.